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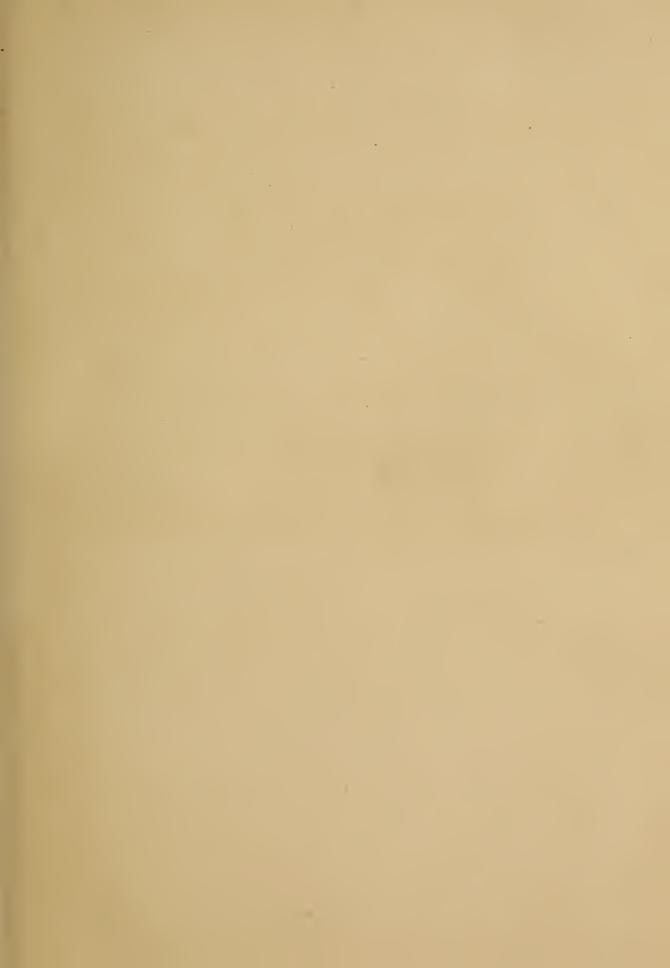
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SOMETIME AND OTHER POEMS



SOMETIME - AND-OTHER POEMS-- BY MAY RILEY SENIOR SE



NEW YORK --- ANSON D. F. RANDOLPH. AND. COMPANY. (Incorporated) 182. FIFTH. AVENUE

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University Press:

JOHN WILSON AND SON, CAMBRIDGE, U.S.A.

To him whose praises make my heart more vain

Than any recompense my life can know,

Whose patient hands, through every doubt and pain,

Make easy places where my feet may go;

And to the child, whose life has been to me

The sweetest flower my bosom ever wore,

Whose little elbow leans upon my knee,—

The lightest burden mother ever bore!—

To these, the sharers of my household throne,

Whose names within my prayers together stand,

I dedicate what always is their own,—

The pleasant labor of my unskilled hand.

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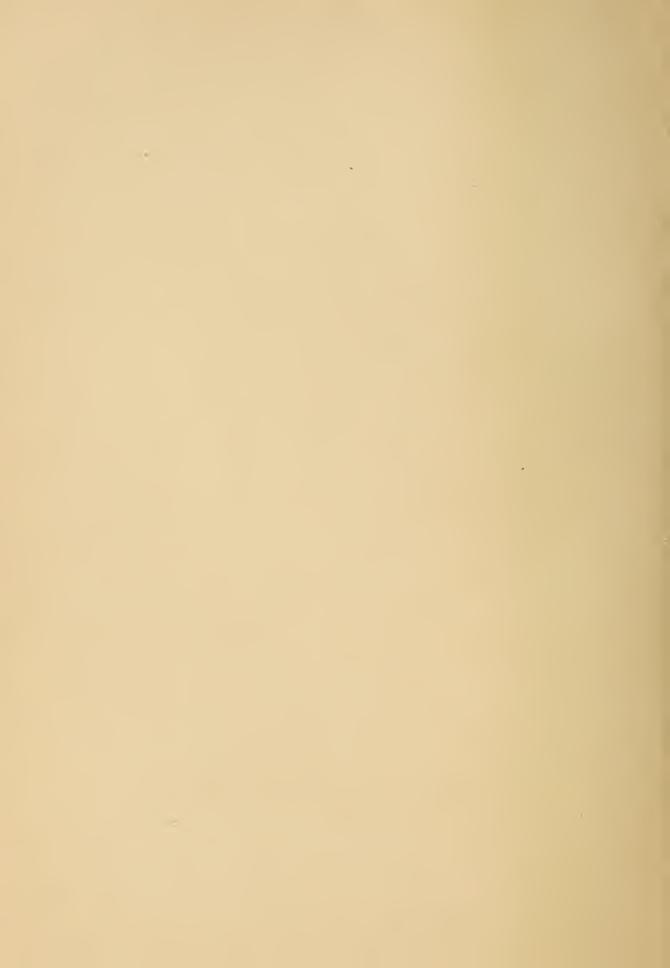
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SOMETIME.

OMETIME, when all life's lessons have been learned,

And sun and stars forevermore have set,

The things which our weak judgments here have spurned,

The things o'er which we grieved with lashes wet,

Will flash before us out of life's dark night,

As stars shine most in deeper tints of blue;

And we shall see how all God's plans are right,

And how what seemed reproof was love most true.

- And we shall see how, while we frown and sigh,
 - God's plans go on as best for you and me, —
- How, when we called, he needed not our cry,
 - Because his wisdom to the end could see.
- And even as wise parents disallow

 Too much of sweet to craving babyhood,—
- So God, perhaps, is keeping from us
 - Life's sweetest things, because it seemeth good.
- And if sometimes, commingled with life's wine,
 - We find the wormwood, and rebel and shrink,
- Be sure a wiser hand than yours or mine Pours out this potion for our lips to drink.

- And if some friend you love is lying low,
 - Where human kisses cannot reach his face,
- Oh, do not blame the loving Father so, But wear your sorrow with obedient grace!
- And you shall shortly know that lengthened breath
 - Is not the sweetest gift God sends his friend;
- And that sometimes the sable pall of death
 - Conceals the fairest boon his love can send.
- If we could push ajar the gates of life, And stand within and all God's workings see,
- We could interpret all this doubt and strife,
 - And for each mystery could find a key!

- But not to-day. Then be content, poor heart!
 - God's plans, like lilies pure and white, unfold;
- We must not tear the close-shut leaves apart,—
 - Time will reveal the chalices of gold.
- And if, through patient toil, we reach the land
 - Where tired feet, with sandals loosed, may rest,
- When we shall clearly see and understand,
 - I think that we will say, "God knew the best!"

"YE HAVE DONE IT UNTO ME."

REMBLING she stood at the heavenly door,—

The world around her was

strange and new;

She had come through the dark from the earthly shore,

And how should a pilgrim know what to do,—

Whether to knock, or whether to wait,
When she finds herself at the shining
Gate?

"Thou hast crossed the Valley," an angel said,

Touching the pilgrim's dampened hair,—

"The lonely valley which travellers dread,

As hither they wend from the land of Care.

Wouldst thou greet the King? Dost wear his sign?

Hast thou steadfast held to thy faith and shrine?"

"It is many a year," the pilgrim sighed,
"Since I have thought upon faith
and creed;

The burdened and poor at my threshold cried;

Had I time to study my lesser need?

And when I would pray for my own soul's good,

They interrupted with cries for food.

"I should lift my head from the Father's breast,

If I were in heaven, and heard their cry;

How could I selfishly take my rest, Thinking of wearier ones than I?

I would slip from the ranks of the undefiled

To comfort the woes of a little child!"

"Peace! Has the Father forsaken his throne?"

The angel answered with stern surprise.

"Has his arm grown short, that he needs thy own, —

Have the woes of the world escaped his eyes?

But see! the Master himself draws near, —

Thy foolish story hath reached his ear."

The woman lifted her troubled brow.

And the mists of earth from her spirit fell;

No stranger's face did she gaze on now, —

She knew the Christ; she had loved Him well;

She had met those eyes, with their tender grace,

On the earth in many a suffering face!

They had often looked from a beggar's hood,

From under a motherless baby's hair;
They had pierced her often, reproached her, wooed,—

Had beckoned her here, had followed her there;

In many and many a strange disguise
She had met the gaze of those pleading
eyes!

His voice was sweet to the tired one;
His touch was balm to her down-bent head,—

"What thou to the least of my poor hast done,

Thou hast done unto me," he gently said.

"In my Father's house there are many rooms;"

And He led her in from the earthly glooms.

WHEN WE PRAY.

S tired children go at candlelight, —

The glow in their young eyes quenched with the sun,

Almost too languid, now that play is done,

To seek their father's knee, and say "good-night," —

So, to our greater Father out of sight, When the brief gamut of the day is run,

Defeats endured, and petty triumphs won,

We kneel and listlessly his care invite.

Then, with no sense of gain, — no tender thrill,

As when we leave the presence of a friend;

No lingering content our souls to steep, —

But reckoning our gains and losses still, We turn the leaf upon the dull day's end,

And, oarless, drift out to the sea of sleep.

CROSS-PURPOSES.

HAT sorrow we should beckon unawares,

What stinging nettles in our path would grow,

If God should answer all our thoughtless prayers,

Or bring to harvest the poor seed we sow!

The storm for which you prayed, whose kindly shock

Revived your fields and blessed the fainting air,

Drove a strong ship upon the cruel rock,

And one I loved went down in shipwreck there. I ask for sunshine on my grapes to-day; You plead for rain to kiss your drooping flowers;

And thus within God's patient hand we lay

These intricate cross-purposes of ours.

I greeted with cold grace and doubting fears

The guest who proved an angel at my side;

And I have shed more bitter, burning tears

Because of hopes fulfilled than prayers denied.

Then be not clamorous, O restless soul, But hold thy trust in God's eternal plan;

He views our life's dull weaving as a whole,—

Only its tangled threads are seen by man!

Dear Lord, vain repetitions are not meet When we would bring our messages to thee;

Help us to lay them, then, at thy dear feet

In acquiescence, not garrulity.

MY UNINVITED GUEST.

NE day there entered at my chamber door

A presence whose light footfall on the floor

No token gave; and, ere I could withstand,

Within her clasp she drew my trembling hand.

"Intrusive guest," I cried, "my palm I lend

But to the gracious pressure of a friend!

Why comest thou, unbidden and in gloom,

Trailing thy cold gray garments in my room?

"I know thee, Pain! Thou art the sullen foe

Of every sweet enjoyment here below; Thou art the comrade and ally of Death, And timid mortals shrink from thy cold breath.

- "No fragrant balms grow in thy garden beds,
- Nor slumbrous poppies droop their crimson heads;
- And well I know thou comest to me now
- To bind thy burning chains upon my brow!"
- And though my puny will stood straightly up,
- From that day forth I drank her pungent cup,
- And ate her bitter bread, with leaves of rue,
- Which in her sunless gardens rankly grew.

And now, so long it is, I scarce can tell

When Pain within my chamber came to dwell:

And though she is not fair of mien or face.

She hath attracted to my humble place

A company most gracious and refined, Whose touches are like balm, whose

voices kind:

Sweet Sympathy, with box of ointment rare;

Courage, who sings while she sits weaving there;

Brave Patience, whom my heart esteemeth much.

And who hath wondrous virtue in her touch.

Such is the chaste and sweet society

Which Pain, my faithful foe, hath brought to me.

And now upon my threshold there she stands,

Reaching to me her rough yet kindly hands

In silent truce. Thus for a time we part,

And a great gladness overflows my heart;

For she is so ungentle in her way

That no host welcomes her or bids her stay;

Yet, though men bolt and bar their house from thee,

To every door, O Pain, thou hast a key!

HIS NAME.

HEN I shall go where my Redeemer is,
In the far City, on the other

side,

And at the threshold of his palaces
Shall loose my sandals, ever to abide,
I know my Heavenly King will smiling
wait

To give me welcome as I reach the gate.

Oh, joy! oh, bliss! for I shall see his face,

And wear his blessed Name upon my brow, —

That Name which stands for pardon, love, and grace, —

That Name before which every knee shall bow;

No music half so sweet can ever be, As that dear Name which he shall write for me!

Crowned with this royal signet, I shall walk

With lifted forehead through the eternal street,

And with a holier mien and gentler talk

Will tell my story to the friends I meet, —

Of how the King did stoop his Name to write

Upon my brow in characters of light.

Then, till I go to meet my Father's smile,

I'll keep my forehead smooth from passion's scars,—

From angry frowns that trample and defile,

And every sin that desecrates and mars,

That I may lift a face unflushed with shame,

Whereon my Lord may write his holy Name!

IF THIS WERE TWENTY CENTURIES AGO.

F this were twenty centuries ago,

And three wise men should seek my house, and say:

"We bring glad tidings! Christ is born to-day;

Arise, and follow yonder star, whose glow

Will lead you to the child!"— would I obey,

If this were twenty centuries ago?

From out my urn of precious, hoarded things

Would I make haste to pour the richest share

To bathe the feet of the young King of kings?

Or break the costliest ointment on his hair

From out my urn of precious, hoarded things?

Alas! I dare not say this would I do,

Since I have slighted many another guest

That came from God, — have stayed from many a quest

That would have led me to the good and true,

To slumber on with head upon my breast;

Nay, nay! I dare not say this would I do.

My best resolves like shifting shadows are;

Each day some holy light shines on unsought,—

- 34 If this were Twenty Centuries Ago.
- And while my silly, fluttering wings are caught
- By the world's rosy candle, Christ's own star—
- How can I tell? might beckon me for naught;
- My best resolves like shifting shadows are.
- And when Christ comes again, as come he will —
- And wise ones hasten forth with rapt delight
- To welcome him, and own his kingly right,
- Will men be questioning and doubting still,
- As when upon that first, far Christmas night,—
- When Christ shall come again,— as come he will?

THE SLIGHTED FLOWERS.

HE slept; and the dream of Heaven

With its rapturous surprise,

Had folded the silken lashes

Over the tender eyes;

And the peace which passeth knowledge

Seemed, to our mortal sight, To circle the pallid forehead With a ring of holy light.

She lay while we piled the lilies,

Like drifts of odorous snow,

On the breast whose thoughts were

whiter

Than milkiest flowers that blow.

We braided them in her tresses,

Their petals caressed her face,
But she who had loved the lilies

Was heedless now of their grace.

She slighted the timid beauty
Of violets, chaste and sweet,
That trailed like a purple ribbon
From girdle to unshod feet.
And she uttered no word of chiding,
When we crushed a rose in our hand;
So we knew by these silent tokens
She had gone to the Unknown Land.

MARY WAKEFIELD.

GAINST the painted hell of Angelo

I set this living picture of despair:

A burning ship, strong men distraught with woe,

Rough seamen's oaths, which meant not oaths, but prayer;

White pleading faces, little children's cries,

And women's arms flung upward to the skies!

- Along the burning deck a woman sped
 - While the red horror close and closer pressed
- Until its hot breath scorched her baby's head,
 - Hiding itself within her throbbing breast;
- When, shrinking backward from the flames' mad kiss,
- She reeled into the water's black abyss!
- Poor mother! Was it granted her to see,
 - Ere sight was veiled by the engulfing wave,
- The noble girl whose arms so lustily
 Wrested from her the babe she could
 not save;
- And dared, in a baptismal scene so wild,
- To stand as sponsor to this orphaned child?

- And this was Mary Wakefield. Daunt-less girl,
 - Who, with a child across her shoulder thrown,
- Set out to wage with death against the whirl
 - Of those mad waves, hand-fettered and alone!
- A deed that gave her right to stand erect With seraphim, nor show them disrespect!
- With one firm hand she held against the tide
 - The sobbing child. The other tightly grasped
- A fender swinging from the steamer's side,
- ·By a stout cable to the railing clasped;
- She drew the heavy beam on inch by inch
- Toward the nearest flame, nor did she flinch

Though the hot tongues came hissing at her brow.

With patient toil she guided on the rope

To where the flame could bite at it; and now

She has the joyful answer to her hope!
It burns asunder, and the heavy beam
Drops down before her into the black
stream!

Upon this strange steed's back she then set down

The little child. And pushing on before

Holding between her teeth the baby's gown,

She struck out bravely for the distant shore,

A league away, with well-aimed, steady strides,

While on its dripping steed the baby rides!

- As rose and fell the girl's white oars, the rain
 - Thrummed its dull monotone. The thunders rolled
- Their heavy drums. The wind swept a refrain.
 - Some distant bells the hour of midnight told.
- And now and then the lightning's vivid thread
- Through the thick darkness wove a seam of red!
- Strong men went shuddering down to death that night,
 - Whose arms were like to knitted strands of steel,
- While this slight girl waged an unequal fight
- For two making no loud appeal
- To God, but praying mutely with her arms,
- Seeking the while to sooth the child's alarms!

- "Hush, little one! Home is not far away,
 - And I am here holding you by your gown,
- Just as old Rover holds you when at play;
 - And with my strong arms plashing up and down,
- I make your queer horse gallop to the shore,
- And baby shall be cold and wet no more!"
- Then, with a tenderness almost divine,
 She tried to thrust a merry nursery
 song
- Through her shut teeth; and while each panting line
 - Smote on her jaded breath like smarting thong,
- I think God ringed her with an unseen crown,
- And every face in heaven bent softly down!

And thus she won the shore. There on the sands

A seaman lay, half naked, cold and faint.

Unfastening her gown with shivering hands,

She laid it on him. Then this gentle saint

Lifted the sleeping baby to her breast, And toiled, half-fainting, to a place of rest!

THE WEARY MODEL.



NE day, an artist in his studio,
Upon his model draped a
quaint old gown,

Of some rare Indian stuff, wove long ago

Of countless mellow shades of gold and brown,—

Sunshine and shadow, like the shining hair

That Raphael made his sweet Madonnas wear.

Silent and passive, as if carved of stone, Stood the young model in her loveliness; For now the tireless artist sought alone
To paint the gold-brown shimmer of
the dress;

Nor must she stir the robe which flashed and shone, —

Hers to be patient and be wrought upon.

At last the sinuous folds were all complete;

Like a soft wave they bathed the pliant girl,

And, rippling from the shoulders to the feet,

Fell on the carpet in a silken swirl:

And then the painter on his canvas wrought,

Trying to paint the language of his thought.

All day the magic colors softly flowed,
Until it seemed as if some wondrous
spell

Possessed the hour, and like a radiance glowed

In the fair lines that on his canvas fell:

And as the hours, down-shod, went slipping past,

His dream of fame seemed blossoming at last.

See how the witchery of that old dress Makes a soft mirror of the canvas, where,

The artist, with a lover's tenderness,
Bestows faint glints of lustre here and
there!

Almost to his quick fancy the folds stir

With their old scents of rosemary and myrrh!

Just then the weary girl forgetful grew And swept a hand along each flowing line, Alas, a hundred ripples straightway flew In answer to that little heedless sign! The glistening folds were changed from belt to hem,

All the familiar grace gone out of them.

The startled girl looked in the artist's face

And read the story of his loss and pain.

She could not call the lines back to their place,

Regret and sighing were alike in vain.

Naught can revive an inspiration dead; The golden vision had forever fled!

What lesson, O my soul, is here for thee

That chideth this poor model overmuch?

To stand henceforth more still and patiently

Beneath the fashioning of God's fine touch!

For ah, what grace by the Great Artist planned

Has been effaced by thy impatient hand!

PARTING COMRADES.

DIEU, kind Life, though thou hast often been Lavish of quip, and scant of courtesy,

Beneath thy roughness I have found in thee

A host who doth my parting favor win.

Friend, teacher, sage, and sometimes harlequin,

Thine every mood hath held some good for me,—

Nor ever friendlier seemed thy company
Than on this night when I must quit
thine inn.

- I love thee, Life, in spite of thy rude ways!
 - Dear is thy pleasant house, so long my home.
- I thank thee for the hospitable days,
 The friends, the rugged cheer. Then,
 landlord, come!
- Pour me a stirrup cup,—our parting nears;
- I ever liked thy wine, though salt with tears.

UNSEEN GUESTS.

I V

E have come back — the absent whom you miss —

To pledge with you before the feast is done:

You do not feel our tender clasp and kiss,

Nor hear us softly enter one by one.

Your voices drown our signals faint and low,

But pledge your unseen guests before you go.

We waft our souls to you as thistleblooms

Launch on the winds their airy mariners, —

O Hearts! Spread wide for us your pleasant rooms,

Nor coldly greet the eager travellers!

From your fair loving cup a draught
bestow

On friends of "auld lang syne," before you go.

Our memory spells the very flowers you wear,—

The roses in their crystal chalices!

She knows the tricks of speech, of eyes,

of hair:—

Ah! 't is a faithful tapestry she weaves! And since so fair and true her colors show,

Then fill to Memory before you go.

And who can tell? Perhaps they too are here,—

Our angels whom we wrongly name our dead!

Leaving their bliss awhile to linger near Some heart that joy hath left untenanted.

Ah, friends! They may be nearer than we know,

Then pledge them tenderly before you go!

Why do we call them dead from whose hot grasp

God kindly takes a tear-embittered bowl, And sets instead within the longing clasp

His perfect cup of rapture? Nay, sad soul!

Name not God's richest gift to mortals so, But quaff to Life, full Life, before you go!

Love is the pilot of our silent crew; No boat so stanch, no sails so trim and white.

Full well he knew the path that led to you

Through trackless air, and sea, and moonless night.

- Nor aught cares he how wild the March winds blow!
- Then fill a glass to Love before you go.
- Good-bye! Good-bye! though Love hath many ports
- Where winds are soft and ships may lie at rest,
- Home is the sheltered bay he fondliest courts, —
- Home is the little harbor he loves best. Hither we sail away, — yo ho! yo ho!
- Then drain the glass to Home before you go.

THREESCORE AND TEN.

AM past my threescore years and ten;

I have quaffed full cups of bliss and bane;

Grown drunk on folly like other men,
With its present sweet and after-pain;
I have had my share of cloud and sun;
And what is it all, when all is done?

We have had our frolic, Life and I;
Jovial comrades we used to be.
Full sails to-day, with a silver sky,
Anon dead calm and a sullen sea.
Now I fear the waves, so I hug the shore

With my tattered sail and broken oar.

I have worn love's flower upon my breast, And said my prayers to a woman's face.

The saints forgive us! If men addressed Such orisons to the heavenly Grace,

They would upward mount, as strong birds do,

And answer bring from the heavenly blue!

I have known the best that life can hold Of fame and fortune, love and power.

And when my riotous blood grew cold,

I cheered with books the lingering hour;

Banqueting on the costly wine

Which Genius pours from her flagons fine.

Yet I would rather lie to-day
Where orchard blooms drift down
their snow,

And feel lost youth in my pulses play,

Its rosy wine in my hot cheeks glow;
I would rather be young, — and foolish,
forsooth, —

Than own the baubles we buy with youth.

I would barter fortune, fame, and power, All knowledge gained of books and men,

For my old delight at the first spring flower,

A robin's egg, or a captured wren
From its nest hid under the tossing
plume

Of a sweet, old-fashioned lilac bloom.

With the world's stale feast I am surfeited;

I long to-day for the old-time thrill
At the purple pomp of a pansy bed,
Or the fresh spring scent of a daffodil.
Alas, I shall never be thrilled again!
I am old, — yes, past threescore and ten.

A MARCH WEDDING.

MPATIENT lovers, have you then no care

That summer holds a month divinely fair;

- When laughing brooks and softly whispering trees
- Chime with the tune of birds and hum of bees;
- When color light, and perfume everywhere,
- Toss out their sumptuous banners to the air?
- Wait, then, for June, and pin the bridal veil
- With hyacinths and lilies sweet and pale.

- And yet, what matter how the March winds blow?
- You make your own fair summer as you go;
- Love hath, like death, all seasons for her own,
- And in each month sets up her rosy throne.
- And I, worn, weary, and oppressed with care,
- The dust of travel white upon my hair,—
- Would give the listless years now left to me
- For one swift moment of your ecstasy!

A GIFT OF GENTIANS.

E timid, fluttering things, whose fringes rare

Are dipped in colors drawn from babies' eyes;

Whose robe of gossamer is spun of air, In the same loom with June's delicious skies;

Whose dainty hems, and skirts so silken fine,

The fairies trust no awkward brush to trace;

Much do I marvel that, with added line, A mortal's hand can paint each flowerface!

But know you not the one who sought you out

- Holds in his palm such magic strong and fine
- That it has even wrapped thy grace about
 - With something more delightful and divine?
- And so, with glad obeisance, do I greet Our first acquaintance,—tender, blueeyed things!
- For with a benediction good and sweet, You fold within my hands your feathery wings.
- And from this day your azure wells shall be
 - The mirror of a face so true and good,
- Your sweet suggestions can but be to me
 - The impulse to a better womanhood!

HIS BIRTHDAY.

HE day the Christ-child's tender eyes

Unveiled their beauty on the earth,

God lit a new star in the skies

To flash the message of his birth;

And wise men read the glowing sign,

And came to greet the Child divine.

Low kneeling in the stable's gloom

Their precious treasures they unrolled;

The place was rich with sweet perfume;
Upon the floor lay gifts of gold.
And thus, adoring, they did bring
To Christ the earliest offering.

I think no nimbus wreathed the head
Of the young King so rudely throned;
The quilt of hay beneath him spread
The sleepy kine beside him owned;
And here and there in the torn thatch
The sky thrust in a starry patch.

Oh, when was new-born monarch shrined

Within such canopy as this?
The birds have cradles feather-lined;
And for their new babes princesses
Have sheets of lace without a flaw,—
His pillow was a wisp of straw!

He chose this way, it may have been,
That those poor mothers, everywhere,
Whose babies in the world's great inn
Find scanty cradle-room and fare,
As did the babe of Bethlehem,
May find somewhat to comfort them.

Thus was he born. And since that time We crown the day with wreath and song;

The bells laugh out in merry chime,
And he his royal Guest doth wrong
Who welcomes him with gloomy fears,
Or salts the birthday feast with tears.

COMING HOME.

HAVE come to the dear old threshold,
With eager, hurrying feet,
To scent the odorous lilies
That once were so white and sweet.
To taste the apricots mellow
That crimson the garden wall;
To gather the golden pippins
That down in the orchard fall.

I passed by the uncut hedges,
And up through the thistled walk,
And beside the fall of my footsteps
There was only the crickets' talk.
The weeds grew high in the arbor,
And the nettles, rank and tall,
Had throttled the sweet-breathed lilies
That leaned on the latticed wall.

The little white house is empty,

Its ceilings are cobwebbed o'er,

And the dust and mould are lying

Thick on the trackless floor.

There are no prints in the doorway,

No garments hung in the hall,

And the ghosts of death and silence

Sit and gloat over all!

No eager faces of children
Brightened the window-pane,
Never a peal of laughter
Rippled along the lane;
So I turned through the daisies yellow,
That nodded to see me pass,
To seek for the mellow pippins
That drop in the orchard grass.

But I found a worm in my apples,
And flung them sadly away;
The pool that I thought eternal
All foul and poisonous lay.

A black snake crept from its hiding
And hissed in the marshes wild,
And I bent my head in the rushes
And sobbed like a homesick child!

A THANKSGIVING PRAYER.

OR toil that is a medicine for woe,

For strength that grows with every lifted cross,

For thorns, since with each thorn a rose did grow,

For gain that I have wrongly reckoned loss,

For ignorance, where it were harm to know,—

Teach me to thank thee, Lord.

For cups of honeyed pleasure thou didst spill

Before their foam had quenched my purer sense;

For that my soul has power to struggle still,

Though panting in the trappings of pretence;

And for mistakes that saved from greater ill, —

Teach me to thank thee, Lord.

That thou dost ravel out the tinselled thread

Of my poor work I thought so bravely done;

That thou dost show me every flimsy shred

In the thin coat of honor I have spun,

And pluck'st the slender garland from my head, —

Teach me to thank thee, Lord.

For ills averted, all unseen by me,
For darkened days that healed my
dazzled eyes,

For suffering which brought a company

Of gentle ministers, in stern disguise; For weariness, which made me lean on thee, —

Teach me to thank thee, Lord.

For chalices of tears that thou dost pour,

For unrequited love and wounded pride;

If they but tempt my lonesome heart the more

To seek the faithful shelter of thy side;

For homelessness, which drives me to thy door,—

Teach me to thank thee, Lord.

THE INN OF REST.

OILING among my garden thorns one day,

While in a stirless swoon the hot air lay,

A traveller passed toward the glowing west,

Who seemed intent upon some cheerful quest,

For with a song he did beguile the way.

Perhaps some question stirred within

my eyes,

For thus he spake: "In yonder valley lies,

Among the murmurous trees, the Inn called Rest;

Where all the pillows are with poppies strewn,

Where toil-worn feet are shod with silken shoon,

- And bed of down awaits each jaded guest;
- I haste at this good Inn to make request,
 For see! the dial marks the hour of
 noon."
 - "God grant," I cried, "you reach that threshold soon!"
- The singer passed, and in the winding lane
- I lost at length the thread of his refrain.
 - One Sabbath eve, consoled and comforted
 - By chant and prayer at vesper-service said,
- With a Laus Deo thrilling through my pain,
 - I left the church, and careless where I went,
 - Behind its ivied walls my footsteps bent,
- Among the low green tents where dwell the dead.

The chill winds sobbed among the grasses sere

Which thatched the narrow roofs.

The sky was drear,

And drops of rain fell on my down-bent head.

Turning to go, upon a stone I read
A name, and dropped upon these
words a tear:

"He sought an Inn of Rest, and found it — here."

A STRADIVARIUS VIOLIN.



HE music of this ancient violin.

Is haunted as men's chambers sometimes are.

Along the liquid ladder of each bar Phantoms of pleasure dance; Regret steals in,

With happier ghosts, and Fate her wheel doth spin.

Torn butterflies of hope a breath did mar

Here flutter, like the flame within a star.
And if thou wouldst, O soul, nepenthe win,

Pause not beside this portal, lest thou hear

The voice of thy dead sorrow whispering near!

- For every passion that thy life hath known,—
- Anguish benumbed, and love thou thought'st flown, --
 - Among these peerless octaves veilèd, wait
 - To speak to thee across the stringed gate.

AN OCTOBER BANQUET.

ITH many a curve of her brown wrist,

The hospitable vine,

In clustered bowls of amethyst, Hands down her unpressed wine.

A gentle courtesy is here;
She works her guests no ill;
The simple goblet she confers
Imparts no fever-thrill.

I fling the drained and broken cups
Among the garden trees;
While butterfly comes down and sups
Upon the honeyed lees.

TRUST.

ITHIN the slender chalice of thy hand

Hold fast what I give thee; and drop down, too,

The fringes of those tender flowers of blue, —

Thy wondering eyes, — nor question nor withstand

What I may give. Perhaps my love hath planned

Some sweet surprise, or test if love be true.

What if it be a sprig of bitterest rue, A swift, strange summons to an unknown land,

A hurting thorn, a cross? Strange gifts, 1 know,

For love to bring; but wouldst thou trust me still?

Quick, dear, - thine answer!

"I should trust until
The hidden meaning in thy gift should show."

Ah, sweet! when God sends just such gifts to thee

Canst thou not answer him as thou dost me?

THE PERFECT NICHE.

IKE some rare structure seen but in our dreams,

And builded of aerial warp and woof,

Milan Cathedral to my vision seems,
With its fair towers and transcendent roof.

I see it now as on that perfect day,
When last I climbed to where its
glistening spires,

Like a great field of sculptured lilies lay,

Fadeless and bright beneath the noonday fires.

Through the rich fretwork the Italian sky

Thrusts its fine color, like an azure flower;

And in the silent night the stars on high Hang their soft lamps within each slender tower.

And niched away within the airy loft, Where the bell's clamor wounds the quiet air,

And the world's noises grow subdued and soft

When they have climbed to the white chambers there,—

Within an arch, enriched with chiselled lace,

Is a pure image, by Canova wrought, Where none may mount its snowy lines to trace,

Or read the graceful language of his thought.

Art may not slake her eager, burning gaze

Beside this frozen fountain of delight; Nor golden hammer break the carven vase

That hides the costly incense from our sight.

Like one white petal of a perfect bloom, Enfolded where no human eye can see, Canova's statue stands through sun and gloom,

And makes its shrine a snowy harmony.

O life, my life! that cravest larger place,

Prating of rusted gifts, of pinioned feet,

Peace!—thou wilt need thine own and borrowed grace,

If thou wouldst make thy narrow niche complete.

CHRIST HAS RISEN!



sad-faced mourners, who each day are wending

Through churchyard paths of cypress and of yew,

Leave, for to-day, the low graves you are tending,

And lift your eyes to God's eternal blue!

Leave, for to-day, all murmuring and sadness;

Twine Easter lilies, and not asphodels;

Let your souls answer to the thrill of gladness,

And to the melody of Easter bells.

If Christ were still within the grave's low prison,—

A captive to the enemy you dread;

If from that mouldering cell he had not risen,

Who then could chide the bitter tears you shed?

Poor hearts! the butterfly, with pinions golden,

Spurns the gray cell which erst its freedom barred;

And the freed soul, with wings no longer holden,

Shines back on life as on a broken shard.

If Christ were dead, you would have need to sorrow;

But he has risen, and conquered death for aye!

Then dry your tears, if only till the morrow;

Arise, and give your grief a holiday!

"BEHOLD, I STAND AT THE DOOR."

HEAR thy knock, O Lord, but, woe is me!

I have been busy in the world's great mart,

And have no table spread within my heart,

Nor any room made beautiful for thee With burnished lamp and sprigs of rosemary;

And should thy stainless hands the curtains part,

Thy tender eyes would miss the joyous start, —

The happy tears, the reverent ecstasy.

Neglected is the house thy love doth lend;

The ashes of dead fires bestrew the hearth;

And still I hear thy voice. O Heavenly Friend,

Come down to sup with me upon the earth,

What if at last thou shouldst the slight repay,

And welcome me as I do thee to-day?

DEAD BIRDS AND EASTER.

T was an Easter morning, bright and calm,

And life, not death, was the glad theme that day;

The air was full of spring's delicious balm;

The maple buds were drooping on the way;

And one sweet leaf, with flush of crimson on it,

Fell on the dead birds of a woman's bonnet.

What say the bells at these good Easter times?

They tell of vanquished death and risen life.

Hush, then, O bells, your inconsistent chimes,

You and the dull old world are hard at strife;

For surely, when the crimson leaf fell on it.

I saw dead birds upon a woman's bonnet!

What does it cost, — this garniture of death?

It costs the life which God alone can give;

It costs dull silence where was music's breath:

It costs dead joy, that foolish pride may live.

Ah, life, and joy, and song - depend upon it —

Are costly trimmings for a woman's bonnet!

Oh, who would stop the sweet pulse of a lark,

That flutters in such ecstacy of bliss, Or lay a robin's bright breast cold and stark,

For such a paltry recompense as this? Oh, you who love your babies, think upon it,—

Mothers are slaughtered, just to trim your bonnet!

Will Herod never cease to rule the land,

That we must slay sweet innocency so?

Is joy so cheap, or happiness sure planned?

Tell me, O friend, who art acquaint with woe!

Does thy sad heart proclaim no protest on it?

Wouldst *thou* slay happiness, just for a bonnet?

- And must God's choirs that through his forests rove,
 - Granting sweet matinées to high and low,
- Must his own orchestra of field and grove
 - Himself their leader be disbanded so?
- Nay, nay! O God, proclaim thy ban upon it,—
- Guard thy dear birds from sport, and greed, and bonnet!
- Their fine-spun hammocks, swinging in the breeze,
 - Should be as safe as babies' cradles are;
- And no rude hand that tears them from the trees,
 - Or dares a sweet bird's property to mar,

- Deserves a woman's touch or kiss upon it,
- Unless she wears dead birds upon her bonnet!
- Dead birds! and dead for gentle woman's sake.
 - To feed awhile her vanity's poor breath:
- And yet the foolish bells sweet clamor make
- And tell of One whose power hath vanquished death!
- Ah, Easter-time has a reproach upon it While birds are slain to trim a woman's bonnet!

PURPLE ASTER.

RAVELY my sweet flower resists

Heat of August, autumn cold;

And though she has amethysts

For her dower, and some gold, Never roadside beggar passed her Without nod from purple aster.

Dear plebeian, but for thee
And thy lover, golden-rod,
Lonesomer the road would be
Which the country folk must plod;
And each little maid and master
Would regret thee, purple aster!

When November winds blow chill,
And the fields are brown and sear,
You will find her, cheerful still,
With her lover standing near,
While old Winter fast and faster
Comes to claim brave purple aster.

AURORA BOREALIS.

HE northern cheek of the heavens,
By a sudden glory kissed,
Blushed to the tint of roses,
And hid in an amber mist,
And through the northern pathway,
Trailing her robe of flame,
The queenly Borealis
In her dazzling beauty came!

I stood and watched the tilting
Of each dainty, rosy lance,
As it seemed to pierce the bosom
Of an emerald expanse;
And I thought if heaven's gateway
Is so very fair to see,
What must the inner glory
Of the "many mansions" be?

I thought of the "Golden City,"
Where the wondrous lights unfurl;
Of its sea of clearest crystal,
Of its gates,—each one a pearl;
Thought, till the glowing splendor
Had quietly passed us by,
And the track of Aurora's chariot
Bleached out from the northern sky!

MEXICO.

ITHIN thy blue-domed Garden of Delight,

Dwells the elusive Spirit of Content,

And makes thy people's lot beneficent.

With thee her wings forget their trick of flight,

And brood above thy dwellers day and night.

For thee Euterpe brings her blandishment,

And Beauty hath her cornucopia spent.

Thy winds are sheathed with velvet, and their might

Is tempered to the little naked child.

God made thee for the old and shelter-less,

And bids fair Nature hide her moods morose.

Thy patios with violets are tiled,
The air enfolds thee in its warm caress,
And Summer never bids thee adios!

WEAKNESS.

HAT ills escape upon the world to-day

Through the loose meshes of a pliant will!

Weakness is an ignoble mistress; still, While Passion may with bolder weapons slay,

Insidious Weakness doth hold equal sway,—

For with such drugs she does men's senses fill,

They sleep upon her knees, nor dream of ill;

Then Samson has the old sad price to pay.

- From Pilate's hand she drew the sceptre down;
 - For while he cried, "What evil hath He done?"
- "He feared the people" and King Cæsar's frown
 - More than the anguish of the Sinless One,
- And Weakness made him miss the truest fame
- That ever stooped to crown a ruler's name!

SOME VIOLETS.

EAR friend, I give thee violets;
And for my fee,
The fragrant secret of thy life
Disclose to me.

For through it, like a guiding thread,
I scent the rue,
And faintly track the odorous feet
Of heart's-ease too.

Reach down on patient cords to me
Thy brimming cup
Of wise, sweet thoughts, that I may
drink,
And thus toil up

To where thou art, so meekly high,
So far away,
I can but kiss my eager hands
To thee to-day.

Or, if I may not reach so high, Then be it so;

If I may sit beside thy feet, 'T will not be low.

And, listening soft, my soul may catch
In some far sense

The tuneful impulse of a life Serene, intense.

Ah, me! I do but spoil my work With clumsy phrase;

And mar, with my uncultured speech, Where I would praise.

So I will lay my heart's-ease down At thy kind feet;

Regretting sore their broken stems, Their vanished sweet,

Yet praying that their faded blue Some type may be

Of the fair badge my heart shall wear Always for thee!

WE ARE UNFAITHFUL.

F man could rule, his love of change would mar

The purple dignity that wraps the hills;

Pluck out from the blue sky some perfect star,

And set it elsewhere, as his fancy wills:

Train the gnarled apple-tree more straightly up;

Lift violet's head, so long and meekly bowed;

With some new odor fill her purple cup, And gild the rosy fringes of a cloud. For, mark! last year I loved the violet best,

And tied her tender colors in my hair;
To-day I wear on my inconstant breast
A crimson rose, and count her just as
fair.

- We are unfaithful. Only God is true

 To hold secure the landmarks of the

 past,
- To paint year after year the harebell blue,
 - And in the same sweet mould its shape to cast.
- Oh, steadfast Nature, let us learn of thee!
 - Thou canst create a new flower at thy will,
- And yet through all the years canst faithful be

To the sweet pattern of a daffodil.

THE BURIAL OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN.*

E mourn for him whose soul on heights divine

Has reached the stature of the undefiled,

In whom a judgment ripe and honor fine Were blended with the nature of a child;

Whose pen with patient toil and godlike grace

Picked out the puzzled knot of slavery;

Unclasped the gyves that bound a hapless race,

And dared to write "the bondman shall be free."

* Written by request, for the occasion of the depositing of Abraham Lincoln's remains in the tomb at Oak Ridge Cemetery, Springfield, Ill.

- The kind humanities that graced his life,
 The tenderness which through his
 justice shone;
- The sympathy that softened human strife
 - And made a brother's suffering his own;
- The life which shadowed forth the perfect plan
- Of heaven's law of equity and right: Such were the attributes, and such the
 - Whom death has hidden from our mortal sight.
- His deeds move onward, though his life is done;
 - His words still sway us like a mighty host.
- "Write down," he said, "my humble name as one
 - Whose love of country was his highest boast."

- 104 The Burial of Abraham Lincoln.
- O man of men, whose name we all revere!—
 - The dearest name in Liberty's fair crown!—
- Only thy corse rests in these chambers here;
 - Death cannot touch thy honor and renown!
- Along the years his gentle words shall fall,
 - "With malice towards none, with charity for all;"
- And men shall write in tears upon his grave,
 - "He bound the nation, and unbound the slave."

CRITICISM.



SONG-SPARROW who had her choice of place

The orchards over,

Espied within a bare, unsheltered space A tuft of clover;

And here, almost beneath the passers' feet,

Her nest confided,

While robin, with a trill of laughter sweet,

Softly derided.

An English sparrow, curious at her choice,

Peeped boldly under,

And cried out, in his pert plebeian voice,

"Oh, what a blunder!"

But when the roses came, I sought the nest

Of my brown sitter,

And heard, beneath her patient brooding breast,

Young sparrows twitter.

And when the withered roses strewed the ground,

The fields were ringing

With the delicious and uncertain sound Of young birds singing.

It was the sparrows, safely fledged! and yet

To human reason

That open nest, amid such dangers set, Seemed arrant treason.

And while these birds, serene and unafraid,

As in a tower,

Dwelt in the careless nest that they had made

Beneath a flower,

A wind had rent the sturdy apple-tree,
. Where robin nested;

And from their snug, round bed her babies three

Were rudely wrested.

WHITE VIOLETS.

E sought for the white violet,

My little love and I;

Among the pastures cool and wet,

Our feet in eager quest were set The dainty bloom to spy.

We knew where purple ones and blue
Were thick as stars at night;
But all our forest journeys through
We had not found a spot where grew
A violet of white.

Like some sweet nun, ethereal thin,
You'd know her anywhere,
With snowy wimple folded in
About her pale and serious chin,
And head bent as in prayer.

In firry cloisters, spicy sweet,
We sought our pale-faced nun.
No trace was here of her light feet;
Only a spider, trim and neat,
Sat in the door and spun.

Where the May-apple leaves had spread
A tent of shining green,
A moth in his gray hammock stayed,
A hermit snail sulked in the shade,
But Violet was not seen.

The snowy star of Bethlehem

Twinkled beside our way;

The forest's fern-embroidered hem

Glowed with red lilies, stem on stem:

But where did Violet stay?

"Why seek white violets alone,
My love," at last I cried,
"When banks with purple ones are
strewn,

Fit for the cover of a throne, And coronet beside?"

"Things won," she said, "with little care
Are seldom coveted;
White violets, like pearls, are rare,
Like amethysts the purple are,
I choose the pearls," she said.

We heard the insects' drowsy croon,

Bees in the thistles slept;

The wood-thrush piped his liquid tune,

The morn led up to sultry noon,

The noon to evening crept.

We found not one white violet;
We know not where they grow.
But there are fairer treasures yet,
Sometimes, in woods and hollows wet,
As we who found them know.

IN PRISON.

OD pity the wretched prisoners,

In their lonely cells to-day;

Whatever the sins that tripped them,

God pity them, still I say.

Only a strip of sunshine,
Cleft by rusty bars;
Only a patch of azure,
Only a cluster of stars;
Only a barren future
To starve their hope upon;
Only stinging memories
Of love and honor gone;
Only scorn from women,
Only hate from men,
Only remorse to whisper
Of a life that might have been.

Once they were little children,
And perhaps their unstained feet
Were led by a gentle mother
Toward the golden street;
Therefore, if in life's forest
They since have lost their way,
For the sake of her who loved them,
God pity them, still I say.

O mothers, gone to heaven!
With earnest heart I ask
That your eyes may not look earthward
On the failure of your task!
For even in those mansions
The choking tears would rise,
Though the fairest hand in heaven
Should wipe them from your eyes!

And you, who judge so harshly,
Are you sure the stumbling-stone
That tripped the feet of others
Might not have bruised your own?

Are you sure the sad-faced angel
Who writes our errors down,
Will ascribe to you more honor
Than to those on whom you frown?

Or, if a steadier purpose
Unto your life is given,
A stronger will to conquer,
A smoother path to heaven;
If, when temptations meet you,
You crush them with a smile;
If you can chain pale passion
And keep your lips from guile, —

Then bless the Hand that crowned you,
Remembering, as you go,
'T was not your own endeavor
That shaped your nature so;
And sneer not at the weakness
Which made a brother fall,
For the hand that lifts the fallen
God loves the best of all!

And pray for the wretched prisoners
All over the land to-day,
That a holy Hand in pity
May wipe their guilt away.

MY SLIGHTED GUEST.



HEAR thy knock, O Lord, but woe is me!

I have been busy in the world's great mart,

And have no table laid within my heart,

Nor any room made beautiful for thee, With burnished lamp, and sprigs of rosemary;

And should thy stainless hands the curtains part,

Thy tender eyes would miss the joyous start,

The happy tears, the reverent ecstasy.

Neglected is the house thy love doth lend:

Ashes of burnt-out fires bestrew the hearth, —

And still I hear thy voice. Oh, heavenly friend,

Come down to sup with me upon the earth,

What if at last thou shouldst the slight repay,

And welcome me as I do thee to-day?

A FLOWER SERMON.

FOUND, within a churchyard gray,

And hotly said, "Oh, saucy elf,
Shame on thy pert and graceless self
To flaunt thy robes of yellow bloom
Among the shadows of the tomb,
And o'er the faces of the dead
To nod thy disrespectful head!
There is no fitness in thy dress,
Nor art thou modest, thus to press
Thy gaudy presence in the place
Where gladness never shows its face."

The startled flower replied: "What claim

Hast thou to judge me? Or what shame Should burn my cheeks because I wear This yellow dress, which is my share Of Nature's brightness, given to grace The sombre shadows of this place?

I cannot harm the sleeping dead
Because I toss my golden head;
'T is all God meant for me to do,
To nod and smile the summer through.
Nor do I laugh while others weep
Through any malice, but to keep
God's perfect plan for my small life,
Unmarred by dissonance or strife;
For this I bloom beside a grave,
And wear the color that he gave."

I turned my flushing face away;
Nor will I try another day
To question any thought or plan
That God designs for flower or man.
Some lives are blithe their journey through,

While others early find the rue.
Whatever color God hath wrought
Into our life or plan or thought,
He knows the best. There is no flaw
Nor dulness in God's perfect law!

THE NEW MESSAGE.

F ghosts of women dead a century

Steal back to earth,

Then verily to-night one talked to me Upon my hearth.

And the pathetic minor of her tones, Liquid with tears,

Was like a plaintive murmur from far zones

And distant years.

"Think not that I am come to you," she said,

"This hallowed night
To gossip of the secrets of the dead
Or tell their plight.

"I could not sleep; for lo! the Christmas bells

A new tune rang:

'New birth to woman!' loud the pæan swells

In rhythmic clang.

"'New birth to woman!' Once no right had she

To choose her place;

Nor place had she save as man's courtesy

Did grant her grace.

"Sometimes, by beauty, trick, or accident,

Grim fate she crossed;

But when from her obeisance she unbent, Her power was lost.

"O woman! fitly robed at last, and crowned
With dignity;

Walking with lifted head your chosen round, Unfettered, free;

"The barbarous traditions of the past Loosed from your feet; Life's richest goblet held to you at last, Brimming and sweet, —

"Forget not those for whom too late, alas!

Dawn flushed the sky, And to their spirits drain a silent glass. Of such am I.

"Hark to the Christmas bells! Goodwill toward men,

Peace on the earth!'

'And unto woman!' — chime they forth again —

.

'New birth! New birth!'"

If ghosts of women dead a century
Steal back to earth,
Then this same hour one came and talked to me
Beside my hearth.

CHRISTMAS ROSES.

GAVE into a brown and tired hand

A stem of roses, sweet and creamy white.

I know the bells rang merry tunes that night,

For it was Christmas-time throughout the land,

And all the skies were hung with lanterns bright.

The brown hand held my roses awk-wardly;

They seemed more white within their dusky vase;

The pale face glowed with pleasure and with praise:

- "These are for daintier hands than mine!" cried she;
 - "Such beauty was not fashioned for my gaze."
- Nay, tired one! Think, rather, that for you
 - These flowers have struggled upward from the clay
 - And journeyed on their patient, leafy way
- Brimming their cups with light, perfume, and dew,
 - To lay them in your palm this Christmas day.

"AVERAGE" PEOPLE.

HE genius soars far to the fountain

That feeds the snow-cap in the sky;

But though our wings break in the flying,

And though our souls faint in the trying,

Our flight cannot follow so high;
And the eagle swoops not from the
mountain

To answer the ground-bird's low cry.

The world has a gay guerdon ready

To hail the fleet foot in the race;

But on the dull highway of duty,

Aloof from the pomp and the beauty,

The stir and the chance of the chase. Are toilers, with step true and steady, Pursuing their wearisome pace.

False prowess and noisy insistence
May capture the garrulous throng;
But the "average" father and
brother,

The home-keeping sister and mother,

Grown gentle and patient and strong, Shall learn in the fast-nearing distance Wherein life's awards have been wrong.

Then here 's to the "average" people,

The makers of home and its rest!

To them the world turns for a

blessing

When life its hard burdens is pressing,

For stay-at-home hearts are the best. Birds build if they will in the steeple, But safer the eaves for a nest.

MARCH.

N the dark silence of her chambers low,

March works out sweeter things than mortals know.

Her noiseless looms ply on with busy care,

Weaving the fine cloth that the flowers wear.

She sews the seams in violet's queer hood,

And paints the sweet arbutus of the wood.

Out of a bit of sky's delicious blue
She fashions hyacinths, and harebells
too;

And from a sunbeam makes a cowslip fair,

Or spins a gown for daffodil to wear.

She pulls the cover from the crocus beds And bids the sleepers lift their drowsy heads:

She marshals the close armies of the grass,

And polishes their green blades as they pass.

And all the blossoms of the fruit-trees sweet

Are piled in rosy shells about her feet.

Within her great alembic she distils

The dainty odor which each flower fills.

Nor does she err, and give to mignonette

The perfume which belongs to violet.

Nature does well whatever task she tries, Because obedient. Here the secret lies.

What matter, then, that wild the March winds blow?

Bear patiently her lingering frost and snow!

For all the sweet beginnings of the spring

Beneath her cold brown breast lie fluttering.

DISPROVED.



CANNOT think the dead come ever back;

Else thou, my mother, wouldst not calmly lie

Within thy grassy tent, but swiftly fly Back through the shadowy and lonely track

To seek the child who does thy comfort lack.

The bliss of heaven thou wouldst thy soul deny,

And, though so weary, all its rest put by,

Rather than loneliness my heart should rack.

Do souls return, my mother, and thy kiss

Anoints not my sad eyes? Come back and prove

How deeper than the grave is thy dear love!

Never till now didst thou the pathway miss

That led to me. Alas, no couriers move From heaven to earth! Thine absence proveth this.

SAILING AWAY.



AILING away from our friendly shores,

Passing the cloud-ships here and there,

I watch the dip of your feathered oars, Wise little mariners of the air!

With map nor guide-book under your wing,

You safely travel the azure track, And reckon the days from fall to spring With never a sign of an almanac.

As I watch your flight to the summerland,

I long to sail with your merry crew;
My caged heart flutters beneath my
hand

To try its wings in the upper blue.

But I have no chart of your sun-lit shores;

And my heart is heavy, it cannot fly. Dip, dip, dip with your velvet oars;
Happier travellers you than I!

IF I COULD CHOOSE.



WOULD not dare, though it were offered me,

To plan my lot for but a single day,

So sure am I that all my life would be Marked with a blot in token of my sway.

But were it granted me this day to choose

One shining bead from the world's jewelled string,

Favor and fortune I would quick refuse To grasp a richer and more costly thing.

With this brave talisman upon my breast, I could be ruler of my rebel soul;

To own this gem is to command the rest: It is the Kohinoor called Self-Control! It is the sesame to broad estates,

To peaceful slopes and mountains blue and fair;

Calm-browed Content beyond its border waits,

And even Love sits in the sunshine there.

No sullen faces frown upon the street, No grated windows, no grim prison walls,

No clanking chains are bound on convict's feet,

And on the ear no angry discord falls.

My life's swift river widens to the sea,

The careless babble of the brook is past;

A few late roses blossom still for me, But spring is gone, and summer cannot last. Had I begun with morning's rosy strength

To seek the flower that on life's summit grows,

I might have found my edelweis at length,

And on the purple heights have gained repose.

Put I have loitered, and the hour is late; Worn are my feet, and weary is my hand:

I can but push ajar the massive gate; I can but look into the Beulah land.

But, friends, if my poor love could have its way,

And blossom into blessing on each soul,

This is the very prayer that I should pray:

"Grant to men's lives the power of self-control!"

GOOD-BY.

O-MORROW night, when the flush has fled
From the beautiful face of day,
And other lovers with clinging hands
Under my lattices stray;
I shall sit in the dusk alone,
And you will be far away.

Perhaps we never shall meet again

Till our burdens have been laid down,

And we have passed through the grave's

dark aisle,

With its ceilings so low and brown, Into the warmth of the Father's smile, Or the shadow of his frown. And should I reach the end of the road
Before your journey is done,
I will lean and listen beside the gate
For the travellers, one by one;
And when I have heard your foot-fall,
love,

My heaven will have begun!

"MY CUP RUNNETH OVER."

For gratitude alone,

Nor interrupt my praise to bring

Petitions to the throne?

Just for to-day may I not eat
From yesterday's full store?
While gathered manna still is sweet,
Shall I entreat for more?

And yet, dear Lord, I cannot live
One hour without thy care;
So in the cup of thanks I give
Petition, too, must share.

140 "My Cup Runneth Over."

I am too ignorant to name

The blessings best for me;

The wisest prayer my lips can frame
Is simpleness to thee.

Yet take, O God, and Friend of friends,
My chalice, poor and rude,
Wherein one strong petition blends, —
Give me more gratitude!

IN EXTREMIS.

HILE children lean their cheeks in drowsy prayer

Against their mother's knees, and all the air

Is sweet with vesper bell;

See the spent day against the sunset stand,

Her smouldering torch down-drooping from her hand
In token of farewell.

With vague regret I watch each ebbing grace.

Come, twilight, gentle nun, before her face

Shall cold and ashen be;
Fold thy gray veil above her as she lies,
And sprinkle her with incense from
thine eyes:
She hath been kind to me.

MELANCHOLY DAYS.

HE vine upon the old churchwall
Has dropped its scarlet gown,
And stands, a discrowned cardinal,
In a monk's garb of brown.

Along each maple-bordered lane,
Which Autumn late has trod,
Her wounded feet have left a stain
On every leaf and sod.

And here, where its own spicy scent
Its hiding has betrayed,
Safe from the frost within the tent
Some tattered leaves have made,

Is one belated pink as pale
As some meek convent nun,
Whose color fades behind her veil
For want of wind and sun.

The golden-rod, a spendthrift gay,
Who poured for asking hands
Palms-full of gold, himself to-day
Rusty and ragged stands!

And now, like doves with cold, gray breasts,

The snow-flakes flutter by,

And brood within the empty nests

Where young birds used to lie.

Oh, who would guess that skies so cold
Hold in their cloaks of gray
The perfect blue and radiant gold
Of Spring's delicious May?

SNOWFLAKES.

N their errand of purity softly they go,

A million fair doves from the clouds swooping low!

They light in my window, and brood on my sill,

With milky-white pinions down-folded and still.

They tenderly flutter through by-way and street,

And fold their wings over each stain that they meet;

Until all the hedges, so ragged and bare,

Seem dressed for a bridal resplendent and fair.

- Our little brown cottage is battered and worn,
- Its hinges are rusty, its shutters are torn;
- But this morning the raggedest roof in the town
- Is shingled all over with feathers of down!
- O doves, as you light upon meadow and plain
- I wish you could cover man's weakness and stain!
- Yes, I wish and I wish that the fast-falling snow
- Could brood with its pinions our faults here below!

THE RAIN.

HE br

HE brooks leaped up to catch it, And the breezes held their breath;

The lilies sprang up boldly,
And shook their heads at death.
The roses blushed to crimson
At the kisses of the rain;
And the sun looked out and saw it
With a flush of jealous pain.

The thirsty little river,

Through the faded grass that led,
Began to flash and sparkle

Like a chain of silver thread.

It tinkled through the meadow

Where the unraked clover lay,

Lifting its rosy blossoms,

As the rain-king passed that way.

Along the dingy street;
It cooled the heated pavement
For the tread of tired feet;
It stole within the chamber
Where a sick one longed for death,
And filled the slender nostrils
With its life-giving breath.

Upon the fluttering pulses
It laid a wondrous calm,
And on the quivering eyelids
It poured a slumberous balm.
It drew from the hot forehead
The burning darts of pain,
And tired watchers slumbered,
Lulled by its soft refrain.

A POMPEIAN PREACHER.

EAR, dainty little "Maiden Hair,"

Whose slender figure, trim and fair,

Apparelled in the softest green, Seems fit for court of faerie queen,

I marvel much that without fear Your tender life finds shelter here, Where silence, death, and grim decay Stalk like pale phantoms day by day!

No little child with dancing feet Embroiders, by its presence sweet, A thread of grace within the gloom That curtains every silent room. The sunshine, with its soft, warm feet, Shrinks back from the unfriendly street, And God's free light steals through the doors,

And shivers on the marble floors.

The timid lizard noiseless glides, The slothful snail in calm abides; But nothing that is fresh or fair Dwells here save thee, dear "Maiden Hair!"

The place where thou dost choose to be Was once a hall of equity; A court, where Justice, stern and cold, Untouched by Mercy, ruled of old.

Too delicate art thou, and fair, To dwell in such a chilling air; And yet, within these ruins gray, Thou livest thy perfect life to-day. Thou art a preacher, sweet and good,
And this low niche where thou hast
stood,

Thy pulpit, from whose tiny walls A sermon, quaint and earnest, falls.

O patient lives that sunless are, From whom bright fortune stands afar! Ye came not to your present state By any careless chance; but Fate,

Whose name is God, hath planned it so, With kinder forethought than we know! And if athwart thy web of gray, Thou runnest no brightness day by day,

Be sure thou hast not wrought so well As this shy flower, whose name I tell, — This dweller in Pompeian air, — My little preacher, "Maiden Hair!"

EXPIATION.

DEATH! we call thee tyrant in our blindness,

And yet thou showest us full gentle ways;

And teachest far more charity and kindness

Than the gay flatterer, Life, whom most we praise!

The sword which we had bared for angry smiting

Thou hidest in a sheath of flowers, O Death!

And wrongs we fancied needed stern requiting

Fade out like morning mists at thy chaste breath.

Before some vanished friend we swing our censer,

And burn our candles at her empty shrine;

As if for past neglect to recompense her,

Or memory to drug with perfumes fine.

We wound the living heart, yet clip the briers

From roses that we lay in pulseless hands;

We build for frozen hearts our tardy fires,

And pour love's chalice upon graveyard sands.

'T was ever thus. Men scourged the living Saviour,

And plaited thorns among His holy hair;

Then sought to expiate their mad behavior

By climbing on their knees some sacred stair.

Life hath one path to heights of expiation,

Where souls stung by remorse may gather balm;

But by no single bound or swift translation

May eager pilgrims reach their purple calm.

The debt thou owest the dead, pay to the living;

For every guilt-spot on thy memory

Drop into some sad hand that needs thy giving

A shining bead from love's rich rosary.

Haste, if the debt be thine, for time is pressing!

Soon must the beads upon thy thread be spent,

And thou set down thy cup of dole and blessing

To pass within the curtain of Death's tent.

WHAT WILL IT MATTER?

HAT will it matter in a little while

That for a day

We met and gave a word, a touch, a smile,

Upon the way?

What will it matter whether hearts were brave,

And lives were true;

That you gave me the sympathy I crave,

As I gave you?

These trifles, — can it be they make or mar

A human life?

Are souls as lightly swayed as rushes are,

By love, or strife?

Yea, yea! a look the fainting heart may break,

Or make it whole;

And just one word, if said for love's sweet sake,

May save a soul!

YOUR BIRTHDAY.

HIS is the day my friend was born to me!"

I cried this morning with a thrill and start;

"O birthday bells, ring out right merrily, And hang your banners out, my happy heart!

It matters not what the storm-signals say,—

It is fair weather in my soul to-day!"

Not like all other days is this, O friend, And I would make some grateful, glad ado;

What signal message can I straightway send

To prove I consecrate the hours to you?

- I would salute each silent, shadowy mast
- Of your good years as they go sailing past.
- What have they brought to you, these phantom ships?
 - Some silver dust, to sprinkle on the hair?
- A faded rose, to lay upon the lips? Some shining tears? A green grave

here and there?

- A jagged cross? A tired brain and heart?
- Ah, friend, are these of thy rich freight a part?
- Or are they pirate ships whose dark offence
 - Is stealing from us youth so fair and good?
- The "sweet first time" of glad experience

Of hope, and dewy love, and parent-hood?

Is it for this their misty sails unfurl,

Just to make plunder of our gold and

pearl?

Nay, nay! if so, more fit were funeral knells

And wreaths of cypress, — one for each dead year, —

Than the sweet jangle of the joyous bells,

The glad "God bless you!" and the birthday cheer.

God guides the years, and freights them as is best;

Let us have patience till we know the rest.

Ah, how like little children we are led Up to the threshold of the future years,

To every waiting sorrow blindfolded,

- And all unconscious of to-morrow's tears!
- And when to-morrow comes, we find it still
- Holds just the strength sufficient for its ill!
- O gentle Trust! if to possess thy grace Needed long journeys to some ancient shrine.
- Though faint and weary, we would seek the place
 - From rosy dawn till midnight stars should shine!
- But they who find thy presence know full well
- That in no far-off country dost thou dwell.
- Oh, what can not her gentle presence 505
 - It is a flower upon sick pillows thrown;

The rose that hides the rankling thorn from view;

The velvet moss upon old towers grown.

It is a box of ointment rare and sweet, Which we may break upon the Holy feet.

And now, dear friend, I think you understand,

That if to-day some happy prayer of mine

Could bring a white gift fluttering to your hand,

I would not ask for things that flash and shine, —

But that upon your threshold God might lay

This flower of trust to crown your natal day.

EASTER DAY.

SAD, sad soul, fling wide your doors,

And make your windows curtainless;

Strew odours on your silent floors, And all your walls with lilies dress!

Throw open every sombre place;
Roll every hindering stone away;
Let Easter sunshine gild your face,
And bless you with its warmth to-day!

Let friends renew each bygone hour; Let children fling the world a kiss; And every hand tie in some flower, To crown a day so good as this! And whether skies are sad or clear,
We'll give the day to joy and song;
For since the Christ is surely here,
All things are right, and naught is
wrong!

O BELLS IN THE STEEPLE.

BELLS in the steeple,
Ring out to all people
That Christ has arisen,—that
Jesus is here!

Touch heaven's blue ceiling
With your happy pealing;
O bells in the steeple, ring out full and

clear!

O soft April showers,
Call out the young flowers,
Touch each little sleeper, and bid her obey;

Set daffodils blowing,
And fresh grasses growing,
To thrill the old world on this new
Easter-day!

O lilies so stately, —
Like maids tall and shapely, —
Christ loved you, and talked of your beauty of old;
Stand up in your places,
And bend your white faces,
While swinging before Him your censers of gold!

O violets tender,
Your shy tribute render!
Tie round your wet faces your soft hoods of blue;
And carry your sweetness,
Your dainty completeness,
To some tired hand that is longing for you.

O velvet-bloomed willows,
Go comfort sick pillows
With visions of meadow-lands, peaceful and brown!

The breath of Spring lingers Within your cold fingers, And the brook's song is caught in your fringes of down.

O world, bowed and broken With anguish unspoken, Take heart and be glad, for the Lord is not dead!

On some bright to-morrow, Your black cloud of sorrow Will break in a sweet rain of joy on your head.

O bells in the steeple, Ring out to all people That Christ has arisen,—that Jesus is here!

Touch heaven's blue ceiling With your happy pealing; O bells in the steeple, ring out full and clear!

IN SILENCE.

S loving friends sit sometimes hand in hand,

Nor mar with sound the sweet speech of their eyes;

So in soft silence let us oftener kneel, Nor try with words to make God understand.

Longing is prayer; upon its wings we rise

To where the airs of heaven around us steal.



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the simpler method of approaching throne of God. Meanwhile, the whole village would be the stronger for knowir that one communion held both the Anglican and the Covenanter in its embrace—nothing having been lost, much having been gained."

Many illustrations might be given of the elasticity of the episcopal system and the freedom of its ministry. At the Galilee Mission of Dr. H. Y. Satterlee, on the East Side of New York, there are extemporaneous prayers, and in Dr. D. H. Greer's St. Bartholomew's House, Col. Hadley conducts services of a genuine evangelistic type. One of Mr. Moody's most useful evangelistic preachers was the Rev. W. H. H. Aitkin, an Episcopalian. The Rev. John Clowes, rector of St. John's church in Manchester, Eng., preached Swedenborgian doctrines from his pulpit openly and avowedly for fifty years.

Friends who have been interested in the Brotherhood of Christian Unity will perhaps imagine that my attitude is changed. Not at all. The question has two distinct sides, as expressed by the terms Christian Unity and Church Unity. The former is a present experience, the latter a future hope. At the beginning of my work for unity, I had only the former in mind. That remains precisely what it has always been. The brotherhood is a means of developing

